



**REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMON COUNCIL
MIDDLETOWN CONNECTICUT**

**MONDAY, MARCH 1, 2021
7:00 PM**

The Regular Meeting of the Common Council of the City of Middletown was held remotely via WebEx and livestreamed on the City of Middletown's Facebook page on Monday, March 1, 2021, at 7:00 PM.

Present:

Councilwoman Jeanette White Blackwell	Councilman Vincent Loffredo
Councilwoman Meghan Carta	Councilman Anthony Mangiafico
Councilman Grady Faulkner, Jr.	Councilman Edward McKeon
Councilman Darnell Ford	Councilman Eugene Nocera
Councilman Edward Ford, Jr.	Councilman Philip Pessina
Councilman Anthony Gennaro, Sr.	Councilwoman Linda Salafia

Mayor Benjamin D. Florsheim, Chair
Daniel Ryan, Esq., Corporation Counsel,
Linda Reed, Clerk of the Common Council

Also Present: Officer Jay Bodell, Middletown Police
Capt. Michael DeSena, Middletown Police
Kevin Elak – Health Department Manager. Acting Health Director
Carl Erlacher – Director, Finance
Ashley Flynn-Natale - City & Town Clerk
Christopher Holden, PE – Assistant Director, Public Work
Catherine Lechowicz – Director, Recreation & Community Service
Capt., John Lozefski, Middletown Police
Keisha Michael – Arts Coordinator
Barbara Knoll Peterson - Mayor's Administrative Assistant
Joseph Samolis - Director, Planning, Conservation & Development
Brig Smith, Esq. - General Counsel

Members of the Public: WebEx (27) and Facebook livestream (unknown number of viewers)

1. Call to Order

Mayor Benjamin Florsheim calls the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. He welcomes everyone to the Regular Meeting of the Common Council. The Chair asks Councilman Philip Pessina to lead the Common Council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Clerk of the Common Council reads the Call of the Meeting and the Chair declares the call a legal call and the meeting a legal meeting.

2. Accept/Amend the Agenda

Councilman Eugene Nocera moves to amend the agenda, to allow the public to speak on non-agenda items. Councilman Philip Pessina seconds the motion.

The Chair calls on Councilman Vincent Loffredo.

Councilman Vincent Loffredo asks if there is a time limit on this section.

Councilman Nocera replies that the standard rules for speakers would apply: five (5) minutes.

Councilman Loffredo asks what the rule is for length of this section.

Corporation Counsel Daniel Ryan replies that is 30 minutes.

Councilman Nocera adds that it is a total of 30 minutes with five (5) minutes allowed per person.

Corporation Counsel Ryan adds that each speaker is allowed up to five (5) minutes.

There being no further discussion, the Chair calls for a voice vote. The Chair states that the motion is approved unanimously with 12 aye votes. (Councilmembers Blackwell, Carta, Faulkner, D. Ford, E. Ford, Gennaro, Loffredo, Mangiafico, McKeon, Nocera, Pessina, and Salafia.) The matter is approved.

The Chair notes that, during the public hearing, members of the public may speak on any topic. The Chair asks for a motion to accept the agenda, as amended.

Councilman Nocera moves to accept the agenda, as amended. Councilman Philip Pessina seconds the motion.

There being no discussion, the Chair calls for a voice vote. The Chair states that the motion is approved unanimously with 12 aye votes. (Councilmembers Blackwell, Carta, Faulkner, D. Ford, E. Ford, Gennaro, Loffredo, Mangiafico, McKeon, Nocera, Pessina, and Salafia.) The matter is approved.

3. Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting of February 1, 2021

Councilman Philip Pessina moves to accept the minutes. Councilman Edward McKeon seconds the motion.

There being no discussion, the Chair calls for a voice vote. The Chair states that the motion is approved unanimously with 12 aye votes. (Councilmembers Blackwell, Carta, Faulkner, D. Ford, E. Ford, Gennaro, Loffredo, Mangiafico, McKeon, Nocera, Pessina, and Salafia.) The matter is approved.

4. Intentionally Removed

Councilman Philip Pessina asks if the minutes of the Special Meeting of February 10, 2021 will be considered. That item has been removed from this agenda. It will be taken up at a subsequent meeting.

5. Public Hearing on Agenda Items -- Opens

The Chair opens public hearing at 7:06 PM. The Chair invites any member of the public looking to speak can do so by indicating using the WebEx hand raise function. Since the agenda has been amended, comments may address items on or off the agenda. Each speaker will have a maximum of five (5) minutes to speak. Speakers are asked to state their name and address for the record. Speakers in the queue will be unmuted in chronological order. The public hearing is limited to 30 minutes. If, at that time, there are additional speakers, the Council may consider extending the public hearing portion of the meeting.

Councilman Edward McKeon reminds the public that the hand raise function is on the screen under the smiley face. The Chair adds that, depending on the platform that someone is using, the hand raise function is either at the bottom of the page or under the smiley face icon.

The Chair calls on each of the following speakers.

Elisabeth Holder (29 Long Lane): As Chairwoman of the Commission on Conservation and Agriculture, I would like to submit the following testimony, which was passed unanimously at February's meeting of the commission: *In view of the Commission on Conservation and Agriculture's purview to safeguard natural resources in Middletown, we're dismayed by the proposed replacement of the turbine at the NRG plant on River Road. Based on the information that has been presented, it appears that the new installation will increase specific air pollutants in our city and degrade the overall air quality. We hope that the Common Council will follow its recent Climate Emergency Declaration by opposing this measure to increase fossil fuel burning and by removing the tax rebate for this type of electricity production.*

As a private Citizen, I would like to submit these statements for the record: *As someone who has cleared and maintained trails in Middletown's open space properties, as well as participating in various special trash-pickup-events, I have seen the scale of plastic littering that degrades our landscapes. For this reason and because of ever-increasing waste disposal costs, I would like the Common Council to support the "Break Free from Plastic Pollution Act" and begin local endeavors to implement decreased plastic use and its increased recycling.*

And on another topic: *For the past 12 years, I have worked with two different therapy dogs – visiting hospitals, universities, high schools, senior living facilities, nursing homes, dementia units, and working in a magnet school on a weekly basis to help struggling readers move ahead. I have witnessed again and again that for many people, touching a dog can relieve stress, help with focus, and bring joy. I commend the Middletown Police Department for being a leader in adopting this approach to crisis situations and urge the Common Council to support this initiative wholeheartedly.*

Stephen Devoto (476 Country Club Road): He is the Chair of the Planning & Zoning Commission, but is speaking as a private citizen, not as a member of the Commission. He is speaking to Item 12E, the acquisition of open space on South Plumb Road. He reiterates, as he is sure staff has already indicated, that the Commission voted unanimously to provide approval for this, stating that this acquisition is consistent with the City's Plan of Conservation & Development. The reasons are: it supports the goal of integrating parks and trails into a unified green corridor; supports the goal of preserving natural resources and open space, including small watercourse and some 19 acres of agricultural land; it maintains the character of the neighborhood; it's good for the environment; and it creates a corridor that connects not only to Smith Park, but to Moody School providing a number of resources for wildlife and for people. He urges the Council to support this acquisition.

John Hall (555 Main Street, Portland): He is the Director of The Jonah Center for Earth and Art. He thanks the Council for this opportunity. He is offering a couple of comments related to the workshop held a few weeks ago and research that they have done, and new developments around the issue of the power plant. He gets the sense that the City – all of the Council and the Mayor – are inclined, at this point, to wait for NRG to come forward with an alternative proposal. That is fine, noting that he would wait for a proposal, too. He suggests that they have a deeper partnership that they can all enter into. This is a complicated matter and they all have a lot of homework to do even before they have a proposal from an energy company. For example, there are many forms of storage. There are certain regulatory changes that will have to be made, changes to the policy of ISO New England that will have to be added to accommodate renewables and to have a large scale storage utility site. These are things we all need to learn about before we enter into meaningful conversation with an energy company. Also related to this is the climate emergency resolution passed by the Council. That resolution called for, not only dealing with emissions from Middletown, but advocating for climate action and climate friendly policies at the State and Federal level. We must advocate for these policies if we want to have a clean energy project such as what we have discussed, there is a lot of work to do at the State and regulatory level. Finally, for the tax agreement, it, as you may understand, there are a lot of questions about this tax agreement: what it means, the projections of revenue are under various scenarios. As a community, we need to understand this deeply. We are trying to understand this by getting information from the City through FOIA (Freedom of Information Act). It would be nice to work on this together in a partnership. He would like to see that, this is just a brief outline of things on his mind, he hopes that there will be deeper conversations either privately with the Mayor at the Commission level with Finance & Government Operations or Economic Development, or whatever commission will take this on. He thinks the City was caught flat-footed a few years ago when this agreement was made and he hopes they will not be caught flat-footed, but, rather have more knowledge and understanding of energy projects and tax agreements and such so, in a year, we have an opportunity to engage in a project with NRG or another corporation. Thank you.

Rebecca McLaughan (no address): (*Inaudible*.) She agrees that they need to come up with a green alternative and a partnership. That would be great.

6. Public Hearing on Agenda Items -- Closes

There being no additional speakers, the Chair closes the public hearing at 7:18 PM.

7. Mayor requests Council Clerk to read appropriation requests and the Certificate of Director of Finance -- NONE

**8. Department, Committee, Commission Reports and Grant Confirmation Approval
APPROVED**

Councilman Grady Faulkner Jr. reads and moves to approve the reports and grant confirmations. Councilman Philip Pessina seconds the motion.

There being no discussion, the Chair calls for a voice vote. The motion is approved unanimously by a vote of 12-0 (Councilmembers Blackwell, Carta, Faulkner, D. Ford, E. Ford, Gennaro, Loffredo, Mangiafico, McKeon, Nocera, Pessina. and Salafia) The matter is approved.

**A. City Clerk's Certificate
APPROVED**

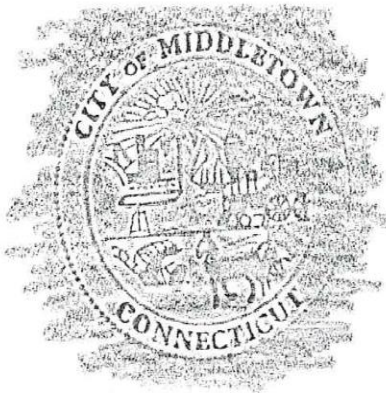


**City & Town Clerk's Office
245 deKoven Drive
Middletown, CT 06457**


Certification

I, Ashley Flynn-Natale, City and Town Clerk of the City of Middletown and custodian of the records and seal thereof, hereby certify that all ordinances and appropriations passed and adopted at the regular meeting of the Common Council on February 1, 2021 at 7:00 p.m., have been advertised in the local newspaper.

Dated at Middletown, Connecticut, this 25th day of February, 2021.



Attest:


Ashley Flynn-Natale
City & Town Clerk

B. Monthly Reports -- Finance Department: Transfer Report to February 18, 2021
APPROVED

Transfers of Funds - Operating Budget Accounts					
From 1/22/21			To 2/18/21		
FY 2020-2021					
Date	Department	Budget Item	From Account No.	To Account No.	Amount
01/25/21	Sewer	Unused Vacation Pay	2050-65000-51970		(1,100.00)
		Safety Supplies		2050-65000-53165	1,100.00
01/25/21	Water	Contingency Fund	5000-60000-57020		(2,000.00)
		Safety Supplies		5000-60000-53165	2,000.00
01/25/21	PW/Highway	General Specialized Equipment	1000-22000-53100-0226		(5,000.00)
	PW/Garage	Oil, Grease, Lubricants & Fluids		1000-22000-53220-0225	5,000.00
01/25/21	Sewer	WPCF-Repair/Replace/Improve	2360-65000-79511-x-x-2020		(25,000.00)
		Vehicle Replacement		2360-65000-79492-x-x-2020	25,000.00
01/29/21	Library	Overtime	1000-07000-51340		(2,000.00)
		Office Equipment Maintenance		1000-07000-55436	2,000.00
01/29/21	Water	Meters	5000-60000-53281		(5,000.00)
		General Administrative		5000-60000-52110	5,000.00
02/05/21	Fire	Radio Equipment	2040-50300-79510-x-x-2021		(1,400.00)
		Parking Lot Repairs		2040-50300-79718-x-x-2021	1,400.00
02/08/21	Water	Interdepartmental Services	5000-60000-52125		(10,316.04)
		Contractual Services		5000-60000-55185	10,316.04
02/10/21	Library	Salaries & Wages, PT Perm	1000-07000-51215		(75,000.00)
		Outside technical Services		1000-07000-55200	75,000.00
		Juvenile	1000-07000-53410		(3,000.00)
		AV Materials: Juvenile AV		1000-07000-53123-x-04302	3,000.00
		Young Adult	1000-07000-53415		(2,500.00)
		Subscriptions		1000-07000-536425	2,500.00
02/10/21	Water	Interdeppartmental Services	5000-60000-52125		(12,000.00)
		Contractual Services		5000-60000-55185	12,000.00
02/10/21	Parks	Contractual Services	1000-22000-55185-0320		(20,000.00)
		Winter/Snow Overtime		1000-22000-51360-0320	20,000.00
02/09/21	Mayor	General Administrative	1000-01000-52110-0010		(3,625.00)
		Salaries & Wages, PT Perm		1000-01000-51215-0010	3,625.00
02/12/21	Fire	Building Materials	2010-50000-53235-0500		(5,000.00)
		Repairs/Maintenance to Buildings		2010-50000-53380-0500	2,500.00
		General Specialized Equipment		2010-50000-53100-0500	2,500.00
02/12/21	Parks	Salaries & Wages, PT Seasonal	1000-22000-51230-0320		(4,000.00)
	PW/City Hall	Salaries & Wages, FT Perm		1000-22000-51110-0227	4,000.00

02/12/21	Clerk	Salaries & Wages, PT Temp		1000-04000-51220	1,435.00
		Elections	1000-04000-52195		(1,435.00)
02/17/21	Senior	Contractual Services	1000-32000-55185-0130		(15,000.00)
		General Administrative		1000-32000-52110-0130	7,500.00
		General Specialized Equipment		1000-32000-53100-0130	7,500.00
02/17/21	Police	Lethal/Less Lethal Equip & Supplies	1000-18000-53140-0180		(4,000.00)
		Misc Supplies		1000-18000-53115-0180	4,000.00
					0.00

- C. Grant Confirmation: Health Department – MRC Public Health Emergency Preparedness – funds to support wages & mileage for consultant for Medical Reserve Corps during Covid-19 pandemic: \$14,000**

APPROVED

CITY OF MIDDLETOWN
MUNICIPAL BUILDING
MIDDLETOWN, CONNECTICUT 06457
REQUEST FOR COMMON COUNCIL CONFIRMATION AND APPROVAL
OF THE FOLLOWING GRANT

Grant Number: Date of Request:
 Name of Grant:
 Amount Requested: Code:
 Grant Period: From: To: Rev Code
 Type of Grant: Amount Loaned from General Fund:
 Department Administering Grant:

When any department, commission, office or agency is the recipient of any federal, state or other grant allocated for specific purposes, these funds shall be immediately transferred to the specific unit which has made application for such grant. Confirmation and approval of such transfer shall be given at the next regularly scheduled sessions of the Common Council. Notwithstanding any other Charter provision, the action of the Common Council in confirming and approving such transfer shall be an appropriation; no public hearing thereon shall be required and said funds may then be expended for the purposes for which they were granted.

Description of services to be provided by this Grant:

Signature:

Requested by:

Status:

Status Date:

- D. Grant confirmation: Recreation & Community Services – grant to support activities, supplies, activities, and bussing: \$20,000**

APPROVED

CITY OF MIDDLETOWN MUNICIPAL BUILDING MIDDLETOWN, CONNECTICUT 06457			
REQUEST FOR COMMON COUNCIL CONFIRMATION AND APPROVAL OF THE FOLLOWING GRANT			
Grant Number:	<input style="width: 90%;" type="text" value="531"/>	Date of Request:	<input style="width: 90%;" type="text" value="2/8/2021"/>
Name of Grant:	<input style="width: 98%;" type="text" value="Recreation & Community Services Activity Account"/>		
Amount Requested:	<input style="width: 30%;" type="text" value="\$20,000.00"/>	Code:	<input style="width: 60%;" type="text" value="2210-32000-59022-0321-03205-x-x"/>
Grant Period: From:	<input style="width: 20%;" type="text" value="7/1/2020"/>	To:	<input style="width: 20%;" type="text" value="6/30/2021"/>
		Rev Code	<input style="width: 60%;" type="text" value="2210-32000-44230-0321-03205-x-x"/>
Type of Grant:	<input style="width: 20%;" type="text" value="Local"/>	Amount Loaned from General Fund:	<input style="width: 60%;" type="text" value="\$0.00"/>
Department Administering Grant:	<input style="width: 98%;" type="text" value="Recreation & Community Services"/>		
<p>When any department, commission, office or agency is the recipient of any federal, state or other grant allocated for specific purposes, these funds shall be immediately transferred to the specific unit which has made application for such grant. Confirmation and approval of such transfer shall be given at the next regularly scheduled sessions of the Common Council. Notwithstanding any other Charter provision, the action of the Common Council in confirming and approving such transfer shall be an appropriation; no public hearing thereon shall be required and said funds may then be expended for the purposes for which they were granted.</p>			
<p>Description of services to be provided by this Grant:</p> <input style="width: 98%;" type="text" value="To support Recreation & Community Services Department activities, supplies, wages, and busing"/>			
<p style="text-align: right;">Signature: <input style="width: 80%;" type="text"/></p>			
<p style="text-align: right;">Requested by: <input style="width: 80%;" type="text" value="Catherine Lechowicz"/></p>			
<p style="text-align: right;">Status: <input style="width: 80%;" type="text" value="Passed"/></p>			
<p style="text-align: right;">Status Date: <input style="width: 20%;" type="text" value="3/1/2021"/></p>			

- E. Grant confirmation: Recreation & Community Services – grant to purchase supplies, candy, and breakfast for annual candy hunt: \$1,000**

APPROVED

CITY OF MIDDLETOWN
MUNICIPAL BUILDING
MIDDLETOWN, CONNECTICUT 06457
REQUEST FOR COMMON COUNCIL CONFIRMATION AND APPROVAL
OF THE FOLLOWING GRANT

Grant Number:	530	Date of Request:	2/8/2021
Name of Grant:	Candy Hunt		
Amount Requested:	\$1,000.00	Code:	2160-32000-57030-0321-03133-x-x
Grant Period: From:	7/1/2020	To:	6/30/2021
		Rev Code	2160-32000-48195-0321-03133-x-x
Type of Grant:	local	Amount Loaned from General Fund:	\$0.00
Department Administering Grant:	Recreation & Community Services		

When any department, commission, office or agency is the recipient of any federal, state or other grant allocated for specific purposes, these funds shall be immediately transferred to the specific unit which has made application for such grant. Confirmation and approval of such transfer shall be given at the next regularly scheduled sessions of the Common Council. Notwithstanding any other Charter provision, the action of the Common Council in confirming and approving such transfer shall be an appropriation; no public hearing thereon shall be required and said funds may then be expended for the purposes for which they were granted.

Description of services to be provided by this Grant:

funds used to purchase supplies, candy, breakfast food for the yearly Candy Hunt event.

Signature: _____

Requested by: Catherine Lechowicz

Status: Passed

Status Date: 3/1/2021

F. Grant Confirmation: Board of Education - cafeteria/ food services: \$77,699.41
APPROVED

CITY OF MIDDLETOWN
MUNICIPAL BUILDING
MIDDLETOWN, CONNECTICUT 06457
REQUEST FOR COMMON COUNCIL CONFIRMATION AND APPROVAL
OF THE FOLLOWING GRANT

Grant Number: 534

Date of Request: 2/16/2021

Name of Grant: Cafeteria/Food Services BOE

Amount Requested: \$77,699.41

Code: 2450-33000-52183-X-X

Grant Period: From: 7/1/2020 To: 6/30/2021

Rev Code 2450-33000-48135-X-X

Type of Grant:

Amount Loaned from General Fund: \$0.00

Department Administering Grant: Middletown Board of Education

When any department, commission, office or agency is the recipient of any federal, state or other grant allocated for specific purposes, these funds shall be immediately transferred to the specific unit which has made application for such grant. Confirmation and approval of such transfer shall be given at the next regularly scheduled sessions of the Common Council. Notwithstanding any other Charter provision, the action of the Common Council in confirming and approving such transfer shall be an appropriation; no public hearing thereon shall be required and said funds may then be expended for the purposes for which they were granted.

Description of services to be provided by this Grant:
2799-FOOD SERVICES \$77,699.41. Total Cafeteria/Food Services BOE through 1/15/2021: \$425,021.91. Additions: \$77,699.41. Total Cafeteria/Food Services BOE through 2/16/2021: \$502,721.32.

Signature:

Requested by: Christine Boume, Chief of Administration

Status: Passed

Status Date: 3/1/2021

G. Grant Confirmation: Board of Education -- miscellaneous grants: \$1,624,601.81
APPROVED

CITY OF MIDDLETOWN
MUNICIPAL BUILDING
MIDDLETOWN, CONNECTICUT 06457
REQUEST FOR COMMON COUNCIL CONFIRMATION AND APPROVAL
OF THE FOLLOWING GRANT

Grant Number: 532

Date of Request: 2/16/2021

Name of Grant: as listed below

Amount Requested: \$1,624,601.81

Code: 2450-33000-59405-X-03025

Grant Period: From: 7/1/2020 To: 6/30/2021

Rev Code 2450-33000-43480-X-X

Type of Grant:

Amount Loaned from General Fund: \$0.00

Department Administering Grant: Middletown Board of Education

When any department, commission, office or agency is the recipient of any federal, state or other grant allocated for specific purposes, these funds shall be immediately transferred to the specific unit which has made application for such grant. Confirmation and approval of such transfer shall be given at the next regularly scheduled sessions of the Common Council. Notwithstanding any other Charter provision, the action of the Common Council in confirming and approving such transfer shall be an appropriation; no public hearing thereon shall be required and said funds may then be expended for the purposes for which they were granted.

Description of services to be provided by this Grant:
2607-SAMHSA - PROJECT AWARE \$360,000.00; 2618-PLTI-PAR UNIV WRAP SVCS \$5,000.00; 2627-CFMC-ALL PRO DADS \$5,000.00; 2734-AFTER SCHOOL: MACD/BIEL \$15,353.00; 2763-TRITOWN COLLABORATIVE OUTOF SCHLY \$30,362.00; 2721-SPECIAL EDUCATION: MEDICAID \$14,248.25; 8001-RETIREEES/COBRA INSURANCE \$1,180,506.00; 8003-WORKERS COMPENSATION CLAIMS \$3,655.02; 8004-PRESCHOOL PROGRAM FEES \$6,413.00; 8021-STUDENT GUARDIAN BUS CAMERA \$1,080.00; 8023-CENTRAL OFFICE RECEIPTS \$7.79; 8027-CENTRAL OFFICE REIMBURSEMENT \$1,000.00; 8028-MTC RECEIPTS \$1,006.50; 8035-ADED - GED RECEIPTS \$65.00; 8039-ADED PEARSON RECEIPTS \$108.75; 8093-FINGERPRINT RECEIPTS \$796.50. Total Special Programs through 1/15/2021: \$18,700,305.80. Additions: \$1,624,601.81. Total Special Programs through 2/16/2021: \$20,324,907.61

Signature:

Requested by: Christine Boume, Chief of Administration

Status: Passed

Status Date: 3/1/2021

H. Grant Confirmation: Planning, Conservation & Development -- Middletown Farmers' Market grant from End Hunger CT, Inc.: \$283.00

APPROVED

CITY OF MIDDLETOWN

MUNICIPAL BUILDING

MIDDLETOWN, CONNECTICUT 06457

REQUEST FOR COMMON COUNCIL CONFIRMATION AND APPROVAL

OF THE FOLLOWING GRANT

Grant Number: 533

Date of Request: 2/16/2021

Name of Grant: MIDDLETOWN FARMER'S MARKET GRANT

Amount Requested: \$283.00

Code: 7025-14000-59046-0000-00000-0000-000

Grant Period: From: 7/1/2020 To:

Rev Code 7025-14000-42046-0000-00000-0000-000

Type of Grant: Local

Amount Loaned from General Fund: \$0.00

Department Administering Grant: PCD

When any department, commission, office or agency is the recipient of any federal, state or other grant allocated for specific purposes, these funds shall be immediately transferred to the specific unit which has made application for such grant. Confirmation and approval of such transfer shall be given at the next regularly scheduled sessions of the Common Council. Notwithstanding any other Charter provision, the action of the Common Council in confirming and approving such transfer shall be an appropriation; no public hearing thereon shall be required and said funds may then be expended for the purposes for which they were granted.

Description of services to be provided by this Grant:

\$283.00 received from End Hunger CT, Inc.

Signature:

Requested by: J. SAMOLIS

Status: Passed

Status Date: 3/1/2021

9. Arrigoni Bridge Project Update: Mayor Florsheim

The Chair states that there is very little to report. Since the last Council meeting, the electrical work has been completed at St. John Square side of the project. Lights have been replaced at Main and Washington. There are still some signal changes to be incorporated, but that will be further during the lifespan of this project. The bridge works will continue for the foreseeable future with the current land arrangement. As he mentioned in the last couple of meeting, they have shifted from the 2-lanes that were in operation while working on the outer lanes to the other lanes. That will continue for the foreseeable future. The meetings with the State Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Chamber continue on a monthly basis. They have encountered a few hiccups, but continue to have monthly meetings to ensure that they receive monthly updates and that they get answers to questions. The only update is that the project is continuing on the bridge side. Spring Street changes that people have been curious about, and which were discussed at the last two (2) Council meetings, are going for Public Works this month for review and approval. They look forward to having those approved at the next Council meeting and moving forward with the work.

While a little out of order, the Chair states that he will address the subject mentioned by the public, which tis the repowering project at the NRG plant on River Road. He mentions this because a relatively new and significant development, which took place just today, is that he and City staff met today with NRG to talk about the outcome of the workshop held a few weeks ago on this project, NRG as well as The Jonah Center presented about the environmental impact of the proposed replacement of a turbine at that facility. We left that meeting on a note that intended collaboration, to work to a proposal different from what had initially been proposed, incorporating energy storage. It would potentially met the market's need in a way that the proposed project would not. That is what they intended to discuss with NRG today and partially what they did discuss. They also learned today that NRG has entered into an agreement to sell all of its Connecticut assets, including the Middletown plant to an energy firm that he is not familiar with, called (*inaudible*). They are still looking at the details of this. The folks that we work with in Middletown are still learning the details themselves. He mentions this, suffice it to say, because this is going to significantly impact his project in a way that cannot yet anticipate. The sale is supposed to close at the end of this year, the 4th Quarter. They are still "I"s to be dotted and "T"s to be crossed. They are fully intending to sell those assets, so we will be dealing with a different corporate entity than we have been dealing with to date. As the public alluded to, this represents a potential opportunity for a new conversation and partnership around our energy future. People will read about this in the paper in the days ahead. The Chair notes that it was news to them and seemed to be news to the on the ground folks at NRG as of this morning. They are trying to get a handle on this and will keep this body and the public updated as best they can. He sees this as a period where they will have to consider their relationship with that company.

The Chair asks if there are any questions on either topic. The Chair calls on Councilman Edward McKeon.

Councilman Edward McKeon notes that the electrical work does not seem to be done at all places. The walk signal at St. John's Square is not fully functioning. He adds that the walk signal, in terms of pedestrian safety, takes a cycle of some 3 to 4 minutes before a "walk" light comes on. Only one signal is working at this point so it is still a danger. The other thing he suggests, in watching traffic patterns, is that 2-lanes can now turn right

when heading west onto the bridge and, in most places, a “right turn on red” is not allowed from the middle lane. He suggests that this be the case here as well, noting that is a huge safety hazard, especially for pedestrians. In terms of the energy plant, he thinks that there is a lesson to be learned: when the City makes an agreement with an entity, we should make sure that the agreement ends when the entity decides to pass its ownership to another entity. We can do one of two things. We can definitely be optimistic and look for a partnership with the new entity. We are also in a place where we can out of an agreement that we made with energy and make sure that it is not passed along automatically to the next entity. He is not sure whether it is or is not, but he thinks that we need to be sure that we are not passing some kind of economics to a company that we know nothing about. That is something that we need to research before we decide what to do. Thank you.

The Chair calls on Councilman Eugene Nocera.

Councilman Eugene Nocera thanks the Chair for the report on both issues. With respect to NRG, it is his wish that we meet relatively soon, perhaps in an informal meeting, with the new owners, including Councilmanic representatives present – the Majority Leader and the Minority Leader – and perhaps one other. This does not break caucus rules. This meeting would allow us to preset the side that we heard from the public, which is important. The new owners may or may not know the extent of the commitment in this community to move in a different direction with this project, he hopes that this meeting can be set up relatively soon, even as simply an introductory meeting with the new owners. Thank you.

The Chair calls on Councilman Philip Pessina.

Councilman Philip Pessina states that he fully supports what Councilmembers Nocera and McKeon have said on these discussions. He thinks that, when they have this meeting, it seems to him – adding to please correct him if he is wrong – that NRG is committed to a sustainable storage facility on the plant. With the new company, he would like to see, on behalf of the Middletown public and residents of Portland, that they continue with this type of sustainable energy storage instead of enlarging the plant. He looks forward to that meeting. It is what we have discussed. He encourages that they put the 3-legeged stool together – the City, NR, and the Johan Center – and get it done. We need to show our commitment as Councilman Nocera has hit upon: show our commitment to sustainable energy usage. Thankyou.

The Cahir calls on Councilman Vincent Loffredo.

Councilman Vincent Loffredo states that there will be an Economic Development Commission meeting on March 9th. One of the topics on that agenda will be to discuss all of the ramifications of this matter. It will be on the agenda. Thank you.

The Chair states that is good to hear. He will address these comments in reverse order. To Councilman Pessina, the Chair notes that he did not mention in his report that in the meeting earlier today, NRG did say that they took away from the workshop that the City's commitment and that they should be researching a sustainable usage storage facility to be located potentially at that site, It is something that they have been exploring in other venues in other States. They are also selling assets in other States: New York and California. They will be the owners and caretakers of this site until the sale takes place in the fall/winter of this year. During this time, they will honor their commitment to take a look at sustainable energy storage facility possibility. That does not mean it will happen and be up and running between now and the end of this year, but it ill potentially put us in a place where we can take that research and build on it in the future. To Councilman Nocera, the Chair agrees that a meeting will be helpful. He was told today that the new company will be reaching out soon. They will also try to obtain relevant contact information to set up that meeting as soon as possible, to meet this new company and have that dialogue. To Councilman McKeon, the City Attorneys are looking at that question: whether the tax stabilization agreement with NRG would continue under new ownership of the company. The Chair will update the Council. He will also pass along the feedback to DOT tomorrow.

10. Covid-19 & Vaccination Update: Health Department, Acting Director Kevin Elak

The Chair turns this portion of the meeting over to Acting Health Director Kevin Elak.

Acting Director Elak reports that the Covid cases are going down in the City, a trend that we are seeing not only in Middletown, but in Connecticut and in the United States. The State weekly report, which he shared in his weekly report, shows that the positivity rate is now under two (2) percent for the first time in some time. Also, more importantly, the case rate is now below 20, which is good to see especially since it was over 25 just two (2) weeks ago. It is good to see when we compare Middletown to towns of similar population as it shows that Middletown is doing somewhat better than other It is promising. The vaccination effort is a big part of that effort. We have much work to do, continuing vaccinations. We are all tired of doing these things, but we still need to wear masks and avoid crowds, especially those not in your inner circle, and wash your hands. These are the things that Councilman McKeon reminds us of during the weekly calls. It is all part of our foreseeable future even as we get the population vaccinated. In terms of vaccinations, today a new door opened to include people ages 55 and over, teachers and support staff, and childcare workers. These populations are able to go to the State website where there are options to make an appointment online through VAMS, pharmacies, and the State hotline to find a vaccine in your area. With the new phase opening and the addition of the 3rd vaccine – the Johnson & Johnson vaccine – will make vaccination more accessible. As production ramps up, distribution will reach more people more quickly. The Governor's age-based tiers over the next couple of months should make the vaccine available to anyone in the community by May. The City is focusing on clinics on the smaller hard to reach target areas. There are still clinics at the Senior Center, acknowledging Director Cathy Lechowicz

and entire department staff, who are reaching out to the public and getting the names of people, who want to be vaccinated by scheduling their appointments. The City has a great partnership with the Senior Center. There are about 1,000 people on the list, who would like to get the vaccine, ages 60 and older. They continue to chip away on that list. They are now also focusing on the homebound. They are getting calls from people for the homebound, ages 55 and older, who cannot get to a clinic. We are sending a team out to vaccinate people in their homes. This will start later this week. They are also reaching out to home daycares, which operate from people's homes and are licensed by the State Early Childhood. There are about 25 licensed homes in Middletown. We are identifying, who would like the vaccine and scheduling a special clinic for that group. We continue our partnership with Cross Street AME Zion Church and will continue Tuesday weekly clinics at the church. City employees age 55 and over are being identified. Anyone in that group interested in getting the vaccine will receive it. Finally, to date they have vaccinated just over 3,300 people. He is pleased with and thankful to the Middletown Medical Reserve Corps, who are the backbone of the vaccination clinic, volunteering their time and making these clinics possible.

The Chair calls on Councilman Edward McKeon.

Councilman Edward McKeon commends Director Elak and the Department of health, the Senior Center with Director Lechowicz and her team for their amazing job. It is a model for the State and has been recognized as such. Great job. Everyone is working tirelessly. We should recognize Director Elak and his staff as they are doing tremendous work during this crisis. He also expands that there will be a clinic at two (2) of the City schools on Wednesday (March 3rd) to begin the inoculation of teachers. It will be handled by the Community Health Center. Educators, which teachers and everyone inside the school, including bus drivers, maintenance staff, and teachers --, will be inoculated during these sessions. He has a question for Director Elak: he understands that the City is getting some of the new Johnson & Johnson vaccine. He asks if there is any information as to quantity and when it may be expected.

Director Elak replies that the State told them that they will get 600 doses of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. He adds that he has also learned not to count it until it is in hand.

The Chair calls on Councilman Philip Pessina.

Councilman Philip Pessina asks about the homeless population. He asks how the City is dealing with it, adding kudos to the Health Department and CHC (Connecticut Health Center).

Director Elak replies that the Community Health Center (CHC) went out to a shelter about a month ago, suggesting that they may actually be doing the 2nd dose. CHC did a clinic for the clients at the Eddy Shelter and people staying at the warming center at Wesleyan.

Councilman Pessina acknowledges this work, adding, "Great job."

The Chair states that they unanimously offer their collective thanks to Director Elak and his entire staff and to the phenomenal Medical Reserve Corps. He knows that they will continue their hard work, getting the City through this crisis.

11. Payment of all City bills when properly approved

Councilman Philip Pessina moves to pay all City bills when properly approved. Councilman Grady Faulkner, Jr. seconds the motion.

There being no discussion, the Chair calls for a voice vote. The motion is approved unanimously by a vote of 12-0 (Councilmembers Blackwell, Carta, Faulkner, D. Ford, E. Ford, Gennaro, Loffredo, Mangiafico, McKeon, Nocera, Pessina, and Salafia). The matter is approved.

12. Resolutions, Ordinances, etc.

- A. Approving rescission of Resolution No. 14-21, which was approved by the Common Council on February 1, 2021, because addition of this item to the regular meeting agenda and supporting document were not made available to the Common Council to be posted at least 24 hours prior to that regular meeting as required by the Governor's Executive Order 7B.**

APPROVED

RESOLUTION No.16-21; K: review /resolution/CC charter appt rescind RES 16-21 – 1 March 2021

WHEREAS, on February 1, 2021, the Common Council approved Resolution No. 14-21, appointing Molly Auger (D) to fill the open seat on the Charter Revision Commission, created by the untimely passing of Commission Tawana Bourne; and

WHEREAS, Governor's Executive Order 7B, states in pertinent part at Section 1 ("Suspension of In-Person Open Meeting Requirements") that "any materials relevant to matters on the agenda, . . . shall be submitted to the agency a minimum of twenty four (24) hours prior and posted to the agency's website for public inspection prior to, during, and after the meeting, . . .;" and

WHEREAS, the resolution proposing the successor appointment to the Charter Revision Commission, was submitted to the Common Council by the Office of the General Counsel with the hour immediately before the February 1, 2021 regular meeting and was added to the regular meeting agenda by amendment from the floor.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MIDDLETOWN: rescinds Resolution No. 14-21, which was approved by the Common Council on February 1, 2021, because addition of this item to the regular meeting agenda and supporting document were not made available to the Common Council to be posted at least 24 hours prior to that regular meeting as required by the Governor's Executive Order 7B.

Fiscal Impact: None

Councilwoman Jeanette Blackwell reads the resolution and moves to approve. Councilman Anthony Mangiafico seconds the motion.

There being no discussion, the Chair calls for a voice vote. The motion is approved unanimously by a vote of 12-0 (Councilmembers Blackwell, Carta, Faulkner, D. Ford, E. Ford, Gennaro, Loffredo, Mangiafico, McKeon, Nocera, Pessina. and Salafia) The matter is approved.

B. Approving the appointment of Molly Auger, a Democrat, to the Charter Revision Commission to serve in the seat left vacant by Tawana Bourne's untimely passing.

APPROVED

RESOLUTION No.17-2; K: CC: review/ Charter Rev Auger appt RES 17-21 – 1 March 2021

WHEREAS, the Common Council created a Charter Revision Commission at its September 8, 2020 meeting; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes § 7-190(a), the Common Council appointed 11 Middletown electors to serve as members of the Charter Revision Commission; and

WHEREAS, under that statute, no more than a bare majority of appointees can be members of one political party; and

WHEREAS, the Common Council appointed Tawana Bourne, a Democrat, to serve on the Commission; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Bourne passed away unexpectedly on January 17, 2021; and

WHEREAS, the Commission must complete its duties according to statute and pursuant to a tight timeline, which requires the Common Council to name a replacement Commissioner who is also a Democrat;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Common Council of the City of Middletown appoints Molly Auger, a Democrat, to the Charter Revision Commission to serve in the seat left vacant by Tawana Bourne's untimely passing.

Fiscal Impact: None

Councilwoman Jeanette Blackwell reads the resolution and moves to approve. Councilman Grady Faulkner, Jr. seconds the motion.

There being no discussion, the Chair calls for a voice vote. The motion is approved unanimously by a vote of 12-0 (Councilmembers Blackwell, Carta, Faulkner, D. Ford, E. Ford, Gennaro, Loffredo, Mangiafico, McKeon, Nocera, Pessina. and Salafia) The matter is approved.

C. Approving that the City of Middletown supports, at the Federal and State level, the goals of the Break Free from Plastic Pollution Act, co-authored by US Senator Tom Udall of New Mexico and US Representative Alan Lowenthal of California, which outlines a comprehensive approach to reducing plastic and packaging waste.

APPROVED

RESOLUTION No.18-21; K: review/ resolution/ PW plastic pollution RES 18-21 – 1 March 2021

WHEREAS, communities in Connecticut and across the nation are struggling to manage the rising cost of recycling programs; and

WHEREAS, Connecticut has one of the lowest bottle bill redemption rates at around 51%;¹ and

WHEREAS, producers of packaging have little incentive to design packaging to minimize waste, reduce toxicity or maximize recyclability, and there is no organized coordination between the producers of packaging and municipalities that are responsible for disposing of or recycling the packaging; and

WHEREAS, producers of packaging have taken some or all responsibility for the management of post-consumer packaging in Europe and Canada, and as a result have greatly increased recycling rates and infrastructure investment, created jobs and reduced taxpayer costs; and

WHEREAS, after 2017 when China changed its import policies to severely restrict the amount of contaminated and poorly sorted plastics it would accept, the U.S. began shipping plastics to parts of Southeast Asia and Africa with poor infrastructure; and

¹ www.bottlebill.org

WHEREAS, many local governments are directly challenged by a robust lobbying effort at the state level to curtail actions to reduce plastic products; and

WHEREAS, the petrochemical industry announced \$204 billion in investments for 334 new or expanded plastic facilities in the United States, many relying on state and local tax incentives, which could increase global plastic production by a third in the next five years exacerbating pollution risks to frontline communities and undermining efforts by communities to reduce plastic waste.²

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MIDDLETOWN: That the City of Middletown supports, at the federal and state level, the goals of the Break Free from Plastic Pollution Act, co-authored by US Senator Tom Udall of New Mexico and US Representative Alan Lowenthal of California, which outlines a comprehensive approach to reducing plastic and packaging waste.

FISCAL IMPACT: None

Councilman Eugene Nocera reads the resolution and moves to approve. Councilman Philip Pessina seconds the motion.

Councilman Eugene Nocera asks Public Works Deputy Director to join the Council to provide background information on this resolution.

Public Works Deputy Director Christopher Holden states that this resolution has a couple of major components. First, it will declare a temporary moratorium on new, virgin plastic production. This means that no new facilities would be constructed and no increase in capacity. It also proposes a National container deposit system. He explains that, believe it or not, there are currently only 10 States that have a bottle bill, which is surprising. It will require a minimum recycle content in plastic products. It restricts the export of plastic waste to other countries. It bans single-use plastic food service items. This would be a big step forward to reduce the plastic pollution throughout the world in both air and water, which makes its way into our food supply. He adds that there is one minor edit to the resolution. He believes that the current sponsors are Sen. Merkley of Oregon, because Sen. Udall is no longer in the Senate.

Councilman Eugene Nocera adds that this resolution was unanimously approved by the Public Works & Facilities Commission. There are some small symbolic parts to this Act, but it puts teeth into our actions in the future with plastic waste, which Middletown wholeheartedly supports.

The Chair calls on Councilman Philip Pessina.

Councilman Philip Pessina states that the Council should reflect on Commissioner Elisabeth Holder's comments earlier in this meeting, noting that everyone can identify with her. As we drive the highways, walk the sidewalks, and walk the roads and trail, it is phenomenal: we find plastic everywhere. It is a great step towards cleaning the environment.

The Chair calls on Councilwoman Linda Salafia.

Councilwoman Linda Salafia states that she has a problem with this resolution because it is generic, open-ended. We are not proposing specific actions. She does not believe that she can vote for this resolution because it is open-ended. This is something that needs to be done at the Federal and State level. It is a local issue, but, it is open-ended, noting that we don't know what we are agreeing to. She cannot vote for this resolution at this time.

The Chair calls on Councilman Grady Faulkner, Jr.

Councilman Grady Faulkner states that it seems to him that we are not taking action here; rather, we are supporting an effort that is going on (*inaudible*). He asks if he is reading this correctly: it is State and Federal legislation.

Councilman Nocera replies, "Yes," adding it is State and Federal.

Councilman Faulkner notes that this resolution is that we are basically supporting what they are bringing forward. Is that correct. It is not a resolution saying that we are doing something, but a resolution supporting something.

The Chair replies, "That is correct, noting that it is in support of the federal legislation.

Councilman Faulkner states that he is surprised by the 51% rate of redemption. He is surprised that people are giving up their nickels and dimes, not turning it back in. He asks if that is correct.

Deputy Director Holden replies, "That is correct," noting that they are not getting turned in for the five cents.

Councilman Faulkner suggests Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts.

² Legislative Blueprint for Reducing Plastic and Packaging Pollution

Councilwoman Salafia asks another question. With regards to what Councilman Faulkner just said, are there any large redemption centers in Connecticut like there was in Meriden/Wallingford, a place where someone could basically bring a pickup truck load. She asks if there are any such facilities left in Connecticut.

Deputy Director Holden replies, "Yes," indicating that the closest one is in East Hartford. There was a large bottle drive this past summer and the gentleman sorts the bottles and brings them in a big truck. They are sorted at the redemption center rather than a grocery store or liquor store.

Councilwoman Salafia suggests that, if there were more redemption centers, people might be better at it.

Deputy Director Holden concurs, noting it would be "a step in the right direction," easier for people to bring them back.

Councilman Faulkner adds, "I agree."

The Chair calls on Councilman Edward Ford, Jr.

Councilman Edward Ford states that he understands that this is a symbolic resolution. He is glad to support it; proud to support it. Society can definitely do more to be sure that we are taking care of the environment. He adds that this proposed resolution follows the path of the climate emergency resolution that the Council passed in September. It is a symbolic way for the Council to express its support to keep the environment clean. He suggests that Middletown could come up with plastic bottle day in the community and hold a town-wide drive symbolizing his resolution. It would need to be planned to be Covid-safe. People could clean up their neighborhoods or their own front yards, wherever they can.

The Chair calls on Councilman Edward McKeon.

Councilman McKeon states that the notion of this act is to break free from the use of plastic, not cleaning up or recycling. It means eventually not using it because it is a permanent pollutant. He would be happy to take anyone for a walk to the landfill, noting that there is tons of waste that comes down the river. It is a serious problem, it is symbolic, but states that, when the laws are passed, Middletown is there with the Federal and State government to say "no" to plastic.

Councilman Edward Ford states that he agrees.

There being no further discussion, the Chair calls for a voice vote. The motion is approved by a vote of 11 aye votes and one (1) nay vote. (Aye: Councilmembers Blackwell, Carta, Faulkner, D. Ford, E. Ford, Gennaro, Loffredo, Mangiafico, McKeon, Nocera, and Pessina; Nay: Councilwoman Salafia) The matter is approved.

The Chair adds that he will reach out to the Federal delegation to communicate this action by the Council, relaying that they support this bill. In addition, to Deputy Director Holden, he acknowledges the City's Recycling Coordinator Kim O'Rourke for spearheading, the Recycling Advisory Commission for its work, and the Town of Mansfield, the first to come up with this resolution. Middletown is the second Connecticut municipality to endorse this resolution. He will include the Common Council on the correspondence to the federal delegation.

- D. Approving the allocation of the CARES ACT CDBG Funding to the following Middletown Small Business: Ron's Tax Service -- \$5,000.00; Jessica's Color Room, LLC -- \$5,000.00; NoRA Cupcake Company, Inc. -- \$5,000.00; Stage Left Dance, LLC -- \$5,000.00; P.J. Jewelers --\$5,000.00; and Kerry Kincy, LLC --\$5,000.00; and that the Mayor is hereby authorized to execute all contractual paperwork necessary to facilitate the allocation of these Grants, subject to review and approval by the office of General Counsel as to form and content.**

APPROVED

RESOLUTION No.19-21; K: review/ PCD CARES ACT Res 19-21 – 1 March 2021

WHEREAS, the City of Middletown Common Council adopted Resolution No. 28-20 on May 4, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the resolution allowed the City of Middletown to reprogram and program additional Community development Block Grant (CDBG) during the COVID-19 epidemic; and

WHEREAS, the allocated funding was appropriated to develop small-business economic relief grants for businesses within the City of Middletown; and

WHEREAS, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development has approved of the use of the funding for this purpose; and

WHEREAS, the City Department of Planning, Conservation and Development has opened the application process for these grant funds starting on June 8, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Planning, Conservation and Development has been assisting small businesses in the application process to ensure eligibility for the CDBG funding; and

WHEREAS, the Economic Development Commission met on February 9, 2021 to review completed applications and has approved to move forward those that have qualified; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MIDDLETOWN: The Common Council hereby approves the allocation of the CARES ACT CDBG Funding to the following Middletown Small Business;

Ron's Tax Service	\$5,000.00
Jessica's Color Room, LLC	\$5,000.00
NoRa Cupcake Company, Inc.	\$5,000.00
Stage Left Dance, LLC	\$5,000.00
P.J. Jewelers	\$5,000.00
Kerry Kincy, LLC	\$5,000.00

And the Mayor is hereby authorized to execute all contractual paperwork necessary to facilitate the allocation of these Grants, subject to review and approval by the office of General Counsel as to form and content.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: These grants are funded through CARES-ACT funding and re-allocated previous year entitlement grants.

Councilman Vincent Loffredo reads the resolution and moves to approve. Councilman Philip Pessina seconds the motion.

The Chair calls on Councilman Edward McKeon.

Councilman Edward McKeon, as information, he recently spoke with Planning, Conservation & Development Director Joseph Samolis, and the City is reaching the end of the current dollars available is \$5,000 grant allocations there may, however, be additional monies, if it gets passed. It has gone a long way to help small businesses in Middletown survive what has been a much longer pandemic than ever expected. It has been a great program and taken advantage of by many businesses. This resolution has his full support.

There being no further discussion, the Chair calls for a voice vote. The motion is approved unanimously by a vote of 12-0 (Councilmembers Blackwell, Carta, Faulkner, D. Ford, E. Ford, Gennaro, Loffredo, Mangiafico, McKeon, Nocera, Pessina, and Salafia.) The matter is approved.

- E. **Approving and authorizing that the Mayor execute and deliver in the name of the City of Middletown, the purchase of the 39.7 acres located at parcels map-lots 07-0329, 07-0330, 07-0334, and 7.2 acres of parcel 07-0333 as city open space and farm land, and to do any and all other acts to effectuate the foregoing, following review and approval as to content and form by the Office of the Office of the General Counsel.**

APPROVED

RESOLUTION No. 20-21; K: review/ resolution/ PCD So Plumb Rd open space RES 20-21 – 1 March 2021

WHEREAS, In 2019 the Common Council of the City of Middletown approved an ordinance appropriating \$5,000,000 for the acquisition of lands and interest therein to preserve open space and farm lands in the City of Middletown; and

WHEREAS, property at map-lots 07-0329, 07-0330, 07-0334, and 7.2 acres of parcel 07-0333 located on East Street and South Plumb Road is available to the City for purchase; and

WHEREAS, the property totals approximately 39.7 acres of contiguous land consisting of more than 20 acres of forest land and 19 acres of farm land; and

WHEREAS, the forest land will add to the land area associated with Smith Park, which is a City owned open space available for passive recreation; and

WHEREAS, the City had the property appraised and determined the value of the property; and,

WHEREAS, the Commission on Conservation and Agriculture recommends moving forward with the purchase of the property; and

WHEREAS, the acquisition supports integrating parks, trails, and open spaces into an integrated unified green corridor system, preserving natural resources and open spaces, and protecting prime agricultural land, all of which are described as goals of the 2020 Plan of Conservation and Development for the City of Middletown; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MIDDLETOWN: that it is authorized and approved that the Mayor execute and deliver in the name of the City of Middletown, the purchase of the 39.7 acres located at parcels map-lots 07-0329, 07-0330, 07-0334, and 7.2 acres of parcel 07-0333 as city open space and farm land, and to do any and all other acts to effectuate the foregoing, following review and approval as to content and form by the Office of the Office of the General Counsel.

FINANCIAL IMPACT – \$725,000 from the Open Space Bond Fund.



City of Middletown
Department of Planning, Conservation & Development
245 deKoven Drive
Middletown, CT 06457

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Middletown Economic Development Commission
FROM: Marek Kozikowski, AICP, City Planner
DATE: February 4, 2021
RE: **Open Space Acquisition**



Bysiewicz- South Plumb Road

The City is in the process of evaluating the property of the Walter J. Bysiewicz, Karen Bysiewicz, Susan Bysiewicz, Gail Bysiewicz and Hellen Cross Trustee, of the property located at 124 South Plumb Road and adjacent properties totaling 39.7 acres for the purpose of open space and agricultural use. After negotiation, the City and sellers tentatively agreed upon a purchase price of **\$725,000** for the acquisition in fee for the properties. The \$5 million open space bond is the funding source of the acquisition.

The purchase price includes the acquisition of the following property:

- A portion of 124 South Plumb Road (7.2 ac) that excludes the dwelling
- 07-0334 (28.1 ac)
- 07-0329 (3.67 ac)
- 07-0330 (0.69 ac)

The property includes ±21 acres of mature forested area that abuts Smith Park. It also includes 19 acres of cultivated land that is available today for agricultural use.

The driveway that serves the existing house is located in a portion of land the city is seeks to acquire. A new driveway will need to be constructed and the old driveway will be abandoned. A temporary easement may be require to allow residents of the home to access the property if a new driveway cannot be constructed prior to closing.

The property, excluding parcel 07-0330, was appraised for \$650,000 using yellow book standards. The owner obtained an independent appraisal that valued the property at \$960,000.

The negotiated amount above the City's appraised value is justified by the need to construct a new driveway, including parcel 07-0330, and bridge the gap between the appraised values.

Marek Kozikowski, AICP, City Planner. 860-638-4842. marek.kozikowski@middletownct.gov



Councilman Anthony Gennaro, Sr. reads the resolution and moves to approve. Councilman Anthony Mangiafico seconds the motion.

The Chair calls on Councilman Grady Faulkner, Jr.

Councilman Grady Faulkner states that he believes that funds have been set aside for this purchase, so he understands that the money is coming from this existing fund. He asks if that is correct.

The Chair replies that is correct, noting that the funds will come from the open space fund.

Councilman Vincent Loffredo adds that there is a \$5M open space fund.

Councilman Grady Faulkner replies that this is good planning on the City's part. Every time we do this, he thinks that the City has not solved the homeless situation. He is hopeful that, somewhere down the road, the City will get the housing situation straightened out and make a permanent dent on the homeless population.

There being no further discussion, the Chair calls for a voice vote. The motion is approved unanimously by a vote of 12-0 (Councilmembers Blackwell, Carta, Faulkner, D. Ford, E. Ford, Gennaro, Loffredo, Mangiafico, McKeon, Nocera, Pessina, and Salafia.) The matter is approved.

- F. Approving that Resolution #100-20 be amended to reflect the decline of the award amount of \$7,000 for Mark Meyering/Middletown March for Science; and that any agency receiving an Arts & Culture Office grant award must comply with the new matching fund ordinance.

APPROVED

RESOLUTION No. 21-21; K: review/ resolution/ Arts award change RES 21-21 – 1 March 2021

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MIDDLETOWN: That Arts & Culture Office requests that resolution #100-20 be amended to reflect the decline of the award amount of \$7,000 for Mark Meyering/Middletown March for Science.

Organization	Amount
Mark Meyering/Middletown March for Science	\$7,000

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MIDDLETOWN: That any agency receiving an Arts & Culture Office grant award must comply with the new matching fund ordinance.

Fiscal Impact: There is no new fiscal impact; the funds are budgeted for FY20/21.

Councilman Edward McKeon reads the resolution and moves to approve. Councilman Grady Faulkner, Jr. seconds the motion.

Councilman Edward McKeon explains that this is an art grant that was made last year. The party, who received the grant, was not able to use it because of the pandemic and is now returning the funds to the City to be recycled by another organization.

There being no further discussion, the Chair calls for a voice vote. The motion is approved unanimously by a vote of 12-0 (Councilmembers Blackwell, Carta, Faulkner, D. Ford, E. Ford, Gennaro, Loffredo, Mangiafico, McKeon, Nocera, Pessina, and Salafia.) The matter is approved.

- G. Approving that the City of Middletown accept the donation of this fully trained community relations and therapy service K-9 from The Hometown Foundation; and that the Mayor is authorized to sign the Memorandum of Agreement, accepting this donation, subject to review by the Office of General Counsel as to form and content.

APPROVED

RESOLUTION No. 22-21; K: review/ resolution/ PD K-9 Unit donation RES 22-21 - 1 March 2021

WHEREAS, the City of Middletown Police Department has the opportunity to receive a fully trained community relations and therapy service K-9 from The Hometown Foundation, a 501(c)(3) charitable foundation, founded in 2002, based in Cheshire, Connecticut, and dedicated to supporting core community needs: animal welfare, emergency responders, individuals with intellectual disabilities, in need, or with major medical illness, and the military; and

WHEREAS, as part of this donation, The Hometown Foundation commits to providing the following to the City of Middletown Police Department for the initiation of this new K-9 Unit:

- (1) \$1,500 donation to start the Department's K-9 Fund;
- (2) \$1,500 in equipment needs; and
- (3) Its commitment to actively fund raise with the Middletown Police Department year-round to raise funds to sustain the longevity of the Middletown Police Department's K-9 Unit.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MIDDLETOWN: That the City of Middletown approves accepting the donation of this fully trained community relations and therapy service K-9 from The Hometown Foundation; and that the Mayor is authorized to sign the Memorandum of Agreement, accepting this donation, subject to review by the Office of General Counsel as to form and content.

Fiscal Impact: None

Councilman Darnell Ford reads the resolution and moves to approve. Councilman Philip Pessina seconds the motion.

Councilman Darnell Ford explains that the Public Safety Commission recently had a presentation by Police Officer Jay Bodell, who is on the meeting tonight and will speak to this item. The Commission is in full support of this community relations effort and the K-9 service for the City. It will offer a good transition as to how we connect with the community. It is the beginning of a bright future, to do more between the Police Department and the community. He asks Officer Bodell to speak to this item.

Middletown Police Officer Jay Bodell thanks the Council for allowing him to speak. This will be a huge benefit to the City of Middletown and the Police Department he explains that, for the past five (5) months, he has been researching community relations ideas, ways to bridge the gap in the community. In talking with Officer McLaughlin of the Groton Police Department Community Officer, he learned that this was a way to have the K-9 donated to the community. This dog, noting that they discussed the therapeutic aspects of it, not only

for officers and staff, police and fire, but it is the type of dog that engages the public, public relations at different functions: parades, school, kid's health & safety day. The dog will be everywhere. When businesses that may reach out to the Police - Pratt and Whitney, Middlesex Hospital, a local car dealership – which will be added to the monthly circuit. He will visit locations and introduce the dog to the staff. He spoke with the Police Chiefs in Groton and Naugatuck, respectively. Both have seen a tremendous increase in the community relations aspect of the dog as well in the department. In Groton, the dog is used at the New London Courthouse for children, who have to testify, for victims, and victims' families. Their dog was just used for a triple murder probable cause hearing. Their dog was called back to each hearing. He adds that both Yale University and the University of Connecticut both have adopted these programs. This gives Middletown the best of both worlds: the community, the Police Department as well as Wesleyan and Middlesex Community College. He thinks this is a good way to get on campus and show that the Police Department is fully committed to the community. Science has proven that these dogs – their mere presence – lowers blood pressure, heart rate, and reduces anxiety for victims and witnesses, for hospital patients or a traumatic event at a schools with accidents and suicides. He explains that he has extensive training in crisis intervention and serves as one of the Department's crisis negotiators. This all goes hand in hand with what he has been trained to do. The dog will be donated by Puppies Behind Bars, a non-profit located in New York. The Hometown Foundation, which is based in Connecticut, is helping to fund the dog, by providing \$1,500 for the first year to include vet and food bills and an additional \$1,500 for equipment needs, the Foundation has also committed to active fund raising to keep the longevity of this program going. The program requires a 14-day training in New York at the prison in New York, working with the inmate, who has been working with this dog since birth. The Police working with prisoners, someone who made a poor decision and is trying to do something to right their wrong he believes that here is a story to be had in that. The program seems to bring positive opprest to the City. It is a growing trend across the country. Middletown would be the first Connecticut city and the third Connecticut municipality to adopt this program. We would be able to assist other surrounding agencies, adding that he believes that other cities will see Middletown's program and adopt similar programs. He is happy to answer any questions.

The Chair states that this is a great program. The Chair calls on Councilman Eugene Nocera.

Councilman Eugene Nocera states that he worked with the Council Clerk to write this resolution as with all of the Council's agenda items. He emphasizes that this resolution is another of Middletown being out front and providing leadership and initiatives for their communities. This is a first for this area, for Middletown. The benefits that the City will reap are immense. He thanks everyone involved in this project.

The Chair calls on Councilman Grady Faulkner, Jr.

Councilman Grady Faulkner asks if there is ongoing training.

Officer Bodell replies that the dog will be nearly 2-years old when he receives it. Prior to that, this dog will have been exposed to schools, bus stops, airports, malls, and soccer games as well as over 10,000 hours of socialization. The dog is expected to know more than 90 commands. In the 14-day training session, he will get the bulk of the training from the puppy raiser, who is the inmate. Once the puppy is here, the program comes to the recipient agency to make sure that the dog is not gaining too much weight that it is being utilized properly, and it is tested on its training as well as how the dogs and officer are working together. If the handling officer goes on vacation, Puppies Behind Bars will come and take the dog back to the trainer for ongoing work while the handling officer is away. This avoids having another handler or having to board the dog in a kennel.

The Chair calls on Councilman Vincent Loffredo.

Councilman Vincent Loffredo asks Officer Bodell how long he has been with the City of Middletown.

Officer Bodell replies that he has been with Middletown for a little over two (2) years. He adds that he took early retirement from the Cheshire Police Department where he was involved with the community. This is his 13th year of law enforcement in Connecticut. He is a 14-year veteran of the United States Coast Guard.

Councilman Loffredo thanks Officer Bodell for an outstanding job.

The Chair calls on Councilman Edward Ford, Jr.

Councilman Edward Ford asks how long the program goes.

Officer Bodell asks if it is the actual program or the training.

Councilman Edward Ford clarifies that he is asking about the program.

Officer Bodell replies that the program is for the life of the dog, adding he does not know the average lifespan of these dogs. He adds that the program started after 9-11 to help first responders, victims, and veterans of that Gulf War. At some point, the dog will age out; however, if we have a successful program here, he does not see why the company would not continue to provide the service to the City. The next person in line for this position – or at UConn they have added a second dog, so they have two (2) active dogs. We would have it for the life of the dog.

The Chair calls on Councilman Darnel Ford.

Councilman Darnell Ford asks if he knows what type of dog it is or other expectations as to how the City would introduce the K-9 office to the community.

Officer Bodell explains that Puppies Behind Bars breeds all of their own dogs, Labs. It could be a Yellow Lab or Black lab. Their stipulation, in gifting the dog to the City, to the Police Department, they estimate the value of this whole program to be \$50,000. They are gifting this to the Police Department with understanding that the dog will be a police officer. The dog will be expect to be at work with Officer Bodell every day. He will be the sole handler. It will be treated as such. The dog cannot be left at home on a given work day. Department administration cannot say that he doesn't want the dog in the building. The dog has to be accepted as a police officer and has to be worked. It requires one hour daily of off leash exercise to maintain its weight. It requires continuous training by exercise, which is its mental training. This dog lived in prison with a vulnerable prisoner, who experienced anger, stress, and sadness. The dog feeds off of human emotion. While the dog is wearing its vest, it knows it is at work. When the vest comes off, the dog knows that it can relax, distress. It will be accepted as member of his family, live with his family: his wife, daughter, and their 4-year dog.

Councilman Darnell Ford thanks Officer Bodell for his commitment and notes that it is a great program.

The Chair calls on Councilman Philip Pessina.

Councilman Philip Pessina states that Officer Bodell has made a great community impact through the Police Department. He commends Officer Bodell as the sparkplug for the Police Department for expansion of community policing. This is what makes the community stronger. He was excited to read about this program, just for its impact on children and youth in the schools. We will be lucky to have Officer Bodell and this K-9 available for students. What brought him to make these comments was a news story about a 15-year old shot at school in Arkansas. He cannot imagine the trauma that they experienced. He now knows that, along with the efforts of the Police Department, this K-9 will be an enhancement to help students and youth. Having an animal to touch, to cuddle makes a difference. He thanks Officer Bodell and assures him that his efforts do not go unnoticed as he is the spark for community policing. In the future, when the new police administration is in place, he knows that he would be glad to have an officer like Officer Bodell under his command.

Officer Bodell thanks Councilman Pessina, adding it is not just him. He has support from the very top of the department, to everyone we see out there, volunteering at events. Alone, he would not be successful.

The Chair adds his thanks for his leg work and for making this possible at no cost to the City. It will be phenomenal addition to the City. He thanks Officer Bodell and the Police Department for taking this on.

There being no further discussion, the Chair calls for a voice vote. The motion is approved unanimously by a vote of 12-0 (Councilmembers Blackwell, Carta, Faulkner, D. Ford, E. Ford, Gennaro, Loffredo, Mangiafico, McKeon, Nocera, Pessina, and Salafia.) The matter is approved.

13. **Mayor's Appointments**

The Chair states that he has a number of appointments. He notes that they will be appointing a new Committee this evening, noting it will actually be two (2) new committees: the building committees to oversee the roof replacement at Farm Hill School and Snow School, the Council having authorized funding last month. For legal reasons, there needs to be two (2) separate committees. He thanks Councilmembers for bringing this to his attention. The membership of these building committees will be identical and they will meet in coordination – back to back – reiterating that, for legal reasons, it will be two (2) separate committees. He will not read the names twice as he names members of these two (2) separate committees.

Urban Forestry Commission:

- Robert Grimm (U): appoint to balance of a 3-year term to December 31, 2022, replacing Ken Ahnell (U)

Housing Authority:

- Sebastian Santacroce (D): reappoint to the balance of a 5-year term March 31, 2025
- Larry Riley (U): reappoint to a new 5-year term from April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2026

Resource Recycling Advisory Council:

- Rafael Bianco (D): appoint to balance of a 5-year term to April 22, 2023, replacing Harold Panciera (D), who resigned January 2021

Snow School Roof Building Committee:

- Councilman Vincent Loffredo (D)
- Councilman Anthony Gennaro Sr. (R)
- Councilwoman Meghan Carta (D)
- Tateisha Perry (D)
- Dan Penney (D)
- John Giuliano (D)
- Farah Scala (D)
- Christopher Sugar (R)
- David Bauer (R)

Farm Hill School Roof Building Committee:

- Councilman Vincent Loffredo (D)
- Councilman Anthony Gennaro Sr. (R)

- Councilwoman Meghan Carta (D)
- Tateisha Perry (D)
- Dan Penney (D)
- John Giuliano (D)
- Farah Scala (D)
- Christopher Sugar (R)
- David Bauer (R)

LGBTQIA+ Commission:

- Daniel Barry (D): reappoint to balance of 3-year term to September 30, 2023
- Dolly Haddad (D): reappoint to balance of 3-year term to September 30, 2023
- Santina Aldieri (D): reappoint to balance of 3-year term to September 30, 2023
- Councilman Philip Pessina (R): appoint as Common Council representative to November 14, 2023
- Councilman Anthony Mangiafico (D): appoint as Common Council representative to November 14, 2023
- Steven Kovach (D): appoint to a 3-year term to September 30, 2024

There being no discussion, the Chair calls for a voice vote. The motion is approved unanimously by a vote of 12-0 (Councilmembers Blackwell, Carta, Faulkner, D. Ford, E. Ford, Gennaro, Loffredo, Mangiafico, McKeon, Nocera, Pessina, and Salafia.) The matter is approved.

14. Meeting Adjournment

The Chair asks for a motion to adjourn.

Councilman Edward McKeon has an announcement for the good of the order. Just before the meeting started, it was noted that Miguel Cardona was approved by the U.S Senate as the nation's new Secretary of Education. He congratulates our neighbor, someone we have come to know in our City for his good work. Also, Middletown is on the cover of *Connecticut Magazine* this month for the downtown. Finally, yesterday the Connecticut Health Center (CHC) was featured in *The New York Times* for their work at their East Hartford supersite.

Councilman Philip Pessina adds that the City's Public Works Department received an award for our parks, adding that he read this recently.

Councilman Eugene Nocera confirms, adding it will be on the next agenda for Public Works and Facilities Commission. It will be brought forward for the Common Council in April.

Councilman Vincent Loffredo moves to adjourn. Councilman Edward McKeon seconds the motion.

There being no discussion, the Chair calls for a voice vote. The motion is approved unanimously by a vote of 12-0 (Councilmembers Blackwell, Carta, Faulkner, D. Ford, E. Ford, Gennaro, Loffredo, Mangiafico, McKeon, Nocera, Pessina, and Salafia.) The matter is approved

The meeting is adjourned at 8:26 PM.

ATTEST:

LINDA S.K. REED,

COMMON COUNCIL CLERK

K: review/ minutes/ 21 March 01—regular meeting—01 March 2021